# Old Faithful Day Hikes

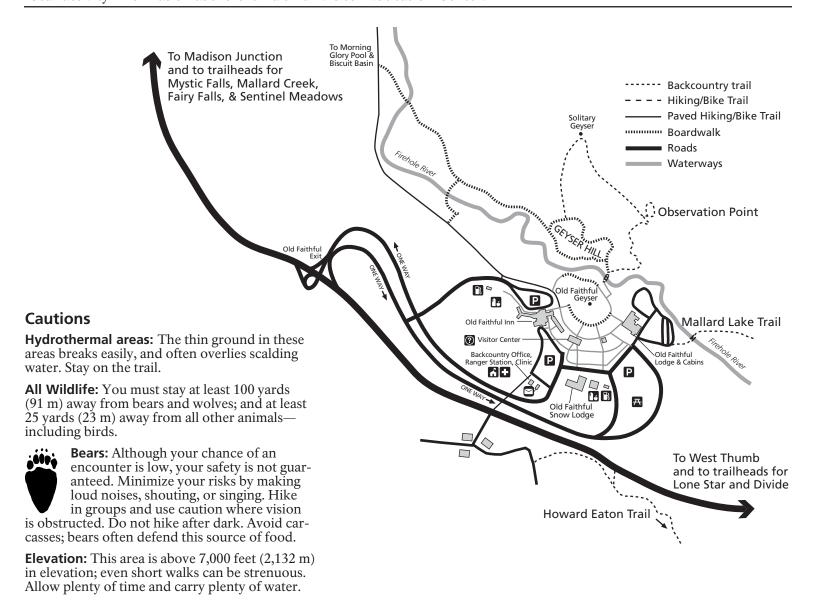
National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior

Yellowstone National Park





Numerous trails suitable for short or extended hikes into Yellowstone's backcountry begin in the Old Faithful area. This guide introduces you to seven selected by the interpretive rangers. Always carry rain gear, extra food and water, and other emergency equipment when venturing into the backcountry. Be sure to obtain current trail condition and bear activity information at the Old Faithful Visitor Education Center.



## **Observation Point**

**Distance, round trip:** 1 mi (1.6 km) or 1.4 mi (2.25 km) (does not include portion on Upper Geyser Basin boardwalks) **Difficulty:** strenuous; elevation gain 160′ (48.8 m)

**Trailhead:** See map above. Walk counterclockwise around the Old Faithful boardwalk; turn right at the sign to Geyser Hill. Trailhead is on the right after the Firehole River bridge, approximately 0.3 miles (0.5 km) from the visitor center.

Switchbacks lead up the hill 0.5 miles (0.8 km) to a commanding view of the Upper Geyser Basin. Return the same way or continue west to Solitary Geyser, which erupts frequently, then to the Geyser Hill boardwalk. The longer route is 1.4 miles.

## **Mallard Lake**

Distance, round trip: 6.8 miles (11 km) Difficulty: moderately strenuous **Trailhead:** See map above. Southeast side of the Old Faithful Lodge cabins, near the Firehole River.

Take the first right turn as you come into the Lodge area and continue down the road to the trailhead. The trail crosses the Firehole River, passes Pipeline Hot Springs, and climbs rolling hills of partially-burned lodgepole pine and open, rocky areas to the lake. Return the same way. (Or return via the Mallard Creek trail, for a total of 12 miles; see trail description on next page.)

### **Howard Eaton Trail**

Distance, round trip: 5.8 miles (9.3 km)

Difficulty: moderate

Trailhead: For more detailed map, see reverse side. Park near the Old Faithful Ranger Station, then follow the paved path across the Grand Loop Road. Turn left at the first intersection, turn left again, and follow orange trailmarkers to the beginning of the trail.

The trail climbs a burned hill, continues through spruce-fir forest, then down to Lone Star Geyser. Return the same way.



#### **Lone Star**

Distance, round trip: 4.8 miles (7.7 km)

Difficulty: easy

Trailhead: 3.5 miles (5.6 km) south of Old Faithful Junction, just beyond parking for Kepler Cascades.

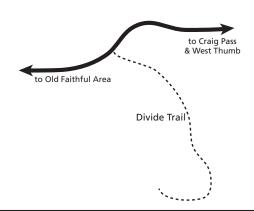
This pleasant, partially paved trail follows an old service road beside the Firehole River to the geyser. Cyclists must dismount at the end of the asphalt and walk the last few hundred feet. Lone Star erupts up to 45 feet (13.7 m) from a 12-foot (3.6 m) cone approximately every three hours.

#### Divide

Distance, round trip: 3.4 miles (5.5 km)

Difficulty: moderately strenuous

**Trailhead:** 6.8 miles (10.9 km) south of Old Faithful Junction, look for a pullout on the right.



This trail crosses Spring Creek and climbs 735 ft (223 m) through mixed conifer forest to the Continental Divide. You can see Shoshone Lake from half-way up the trail.

## **Mystic Falls**

Distance, round trip: 2.5 miles (4 km)

Difficulty: moderately strenuous

Trailhead: At the back of the Biscuit Basin boardwalk, 2 miles (3.2 km) north of Old Faithful Junction. You can also begin 0.25 miles/0.4 km south of Biscuit Basin; park in pullouts on either side of the road.



Bear Management Area:

Trail closed until the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend (usually the last Saturday in May).



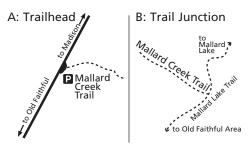
This trail follows a lovely creek through mixed conifer forest to the 70-foot falls, over which the Little Firehole River drops from the Madison Plateau. Turn around here or climb the switchbacks to an overlook of the Upper Geyser Basin, then loop back to the main trail.

# **Mallard Creek**

Distance, round trip: 9.2 miles (14.8 km)

Difficulty: strenuous

Trailhead: See Map A at right. Approximately 3.8 miles (6.1 km) north of Old Faithful Junction, toward Madison; look for a trailhead sign and pullout on the right.



Originally designed as a winter ski trail, this route follows hilly terrain through heavily burned forest up to Mallard Lake. Return the same way or, if you have arranged a car shuttle, follow the Mallard Lake Trail to the Old Faithful area (Map B: Trail Junction).

# **Fairy Falls**

**Distance, round trip:** 5 miles (8.3 km) or 7 miles (11.2 km)

Difficulty: easy

Trailheads: Short route—Park 1 mile (1.5 km) south of Midway Geyser Basin, cross the steel bridge and walk 1 mile (1.5 km) to the trailhead.

Long route—park at the end of Fountain Flat Dr. and walk 13/4 miles (2.8 km) to the trailhead.

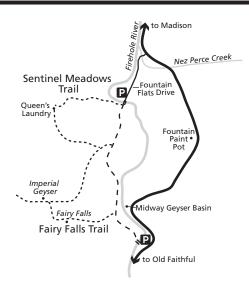
The trail travels through young forest 1.6 miles (2.6 km) to the 200-foot (61 m) falls. Continue 0.65 miles (1.05 km) past the falls through a wet area to Imperial Geyser, which has frequent minor eruptions.



**Bear Management Area:** 

Trail closed until the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend (usually the last Saturday in May).

For more information www.nps.gov/yell



# Sentinel Meadows & Queen's Laundry

**Distance, round trip:** 3 miles (4.8 km) (4 mi/6 km if you go to Queen's Laundry)

Difficulty: Moderate

Very wet in spring and buggy in summer.

Trailhead: 10 miles (16 km) north of Old Faithful, turn left on Fountain Flat Drive. Park at the end of the road, cross the footbridge over the Firehole River to the trailhead

The trail follows the Firehole River a short distance, then veers toward the meadows. Look for the large sinter mounds of hot springs and the remains of the old, incomplete bathhouse at Queen's Laundry, 1.9 miles (3.1 km) from the trailhead.

Visitor centers have a free hike handout for each major area of the park. A "Day Hike Sampler," with a hike or two per area, is also available along with several guides for trails throughout the park.